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72-19/3

17 January 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director-Comptroller

Bill--

1. I have just finished reading your proposed memorandum to the Director and the material on countersubversion you recommend he send to Kissinger. Frankly, my initial, intuitive reaction is negative. Fortunately, your memorandum arrived in my office while I was on leave and Paul was thoughtful enough to have already circulated your material to OCI, OER, and OSR for their comments which I read only after reading your paper. I say fortunately because my reaction could not have had any influence on their comments. Yet, their reactions were far from a full endorsement of your proposal.

✓ 2. All the offices found the idea an interesting one in general, but one that in detail would be not only difficult to implement, but probably very difficult to sell to the Congress or the public. There is a general feeling that the national mood at this time is one that would be quickly "turned off" by any elaborate programs, regardless of their virtue, which might get us inextricably involved in the internal affairs of distant and seemingly unimportant countries. Though you might intend otherwise, the term is likely to be associated with cold-war concepts. With this in mind and understanding something of the way things are dealt with in the NSC Staff, I do not believe that the proposal would be received with much enthusiasm there at this time. ✓

3. One of the problems we have with your paper is that the term countersubversion is not clearly enough defined to really understand the objective and to distinguish that concept from counterinsurgency and suppression of legitimate opposition political

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✓ activity. The word itself implies maintenance of the existing government regardless of its political outlook. Your description on the bottom of page 5 limits it to threats of "subversive forces to U.S. interests in the coming years". Your paper also states that such programs, though uncoordinated, do exist. I gather what you recommend is a more thoughtful, systematic approach to maintaining governments favorable to U.S. interests. There is, of course, a parallel concept of establishing governments favorable to U.S. interests where none exist at present; yet this is not covered in your paper.

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7. 4. To some, the proposal seems to have an implicit assumption that "the American way" or at least its system of legal and political values can be imposed uniformly throughout the world. Very few of the world's changes of government take place according to democratic constitutional procedures, and we doubt such ideals would ever work in a significant portion of this troubled planet. Almost all governmental changes outside western Europe and North America are brought about by force or coercion. Subversion--coups and plotting of coups--is often the only means available to change a government. In the decade ahead it is conceivable we might want to see changes in some governments where we have earlier established strong antisubversion control measures.

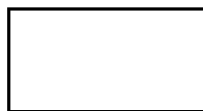
✓ 5. I am also wary of seeing the Agency become too deeply embroiled with foreign police forces. Some might read the proposal as an effort by CIA to put itself in a position of controlling programs which seek to perpetuate the status quo and to resist the processes of democratic change. Although police forces can be exploited for their positive intelligence value, I believe that a leading role by the Agency in training, equipping, and controlling such police forces will leave the Agency open to charges of aiding and abetting suppression, for all too often national police have come to represent just that to a native populace as well as much of the American public.

6. Even if you decide to forward your proposal, I believe that more work should be put into it before doing so. There are assertions in your paper that the present efforts to maintain governments favorable to the U.S. are not well thought out, have no "strategic" basis, and are fragmented in application. It would seem to me that the proposal would be better understood if it included one or two examples with facts to substantiate your assertions. Perhaps a review of the situation and programs as they apply to a specific country would be useful to the reader especially if this example included a discussion of how your approach would improve the situation.

✓ 7. With such a discussion in hand and a fuller statement of what countersubversion is and is not, I believe a country-by-country review of the situation would be helpful. Such an examination would provide an ordering of priorities that would limit the areas of concern and make the problem more manageable in terms of analytical and intelligence collection resources.

✓ 8. Although the reactions from the offices in this Directorate were far from enthusiastic, I believe we could put more analytical resources on the problem, and with parallel bolstering of collection, we could be responsive in cases where there are agreed subversive threats of concern to U.S. interests. As you know, we have a small experimental effort underway for Once we have completed this exercise, we may be able to give more meaningful judgments on the adequacy of our capabilities to handle this problem or understand the changes needed to build up our capabilities.

✓ 9. I hope these comments will be useful as you reconsider your proposal. All this reflects a counsel of moderation and restraint in approaching the problem. I believe such an approach would avoid the many pitfalls and excesses often associated with major bureaucratic attacks on the problem which in application will require disparate solutions.



EDWARD W. PROCTOR
Deputy Director for Intelligence

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